

Statement of Joseph A. Gunn
Executive Director, Independent Review Panel
Little Hoover Commission
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The proposed reorganization plan submitted by the Youth and Adult Correctional Agency contains much to praise. It recognizes and proposed changes which will make that Agency more accountable, uniform and transparent in the crucial areas of planning and research, internal discipline, technology, labor relations, audits, risk management, personnel and training. However, there are major parts of the proposal which, in my opinion, will nullify these successes and hinder reform.

1. The elimination of the Independent Review Panel's proposal to establish enhanced Regional Directors misses the opportunity in Corrections to establish an executive ladder where qualified executives have the ability to gain experience in all of the various components which make up the corrections system.
2. Separating adult operations, youth operations and parole diminishes the opportunity to develop the coordinated, seamless transition of inmates back into society. Since no one has the overall responsibility at the operational level no one is accountable.
3. Taking health care and risk management responsibilities away from Wardens risks failure in these areas. Again, what is the wardens accountability if he has no responsibility?
4. Additionally, just having the Wardens responsible for detention ensures that you will have the same average or below average persons in this position. Wardens will not be receiving the work experience necessary to promote and grow in the organization. Conversely, poor-performing wardens will not be able to fail and thus, be replaced. This will inhibit qualified personnel from rising through the ranks.
5. The Health Care Administrator, because of its operational and financial importance to the organization, should report directly to the Secretary. The Administrator should be responsible for the development of uniform standards and procedures. But the implementation of those policies must rest with the Regional Directors and Wardens.
6. Most important, the elimination of a Civilian Commission, the linchpin of the Independent Review Panel's recommendations, will make reform unnecessarily difficult, if not impossible. A Commission, confirmed by the Senate, provides a long-term buffer zone between reform and future Legislatures and Governors. The Commission, with no political aspirations, will continually drive reform.
7. The Independent Review Panel strongly recommended that the Youth Authority be given equal status with Corrections and that they would enjoy direct access to the Secretary. The Panel, in order to protect the mission of

the Youth Authority, also recommended that at least one of the Civilian Commissioners be an expert from the juvenile field. The recommended reorganization by Corrections delegates the Youth Authority to a sub-role and they would join five other entities in reporting to two deputy directors. It is my fear that the Youth Authority will be overlooked under the proposed reorganization when it comes to prioritizing programs. I believe that if the proposed reorganization goes through as submitted, there will be a movement by the Legislature and experts in the juvenile field to break the Youth Authority away from the Department of Corrections altogether.